

Tuesday, 25 September

1. Resumed Watch Committee chairmanship. Combined Watch Report (dtd 26 Sept.) reported: "Cuba: The Castro regime is continuing to receive extensive military assistance from the Soviet Union. Departures of Soviet vessels bound for Cuba continue, and most of these ships are believed to be carrying military cargoes. There are indications that additional Soviet Bloc military personnel are also en route to Cuba. The probable delivery of eight more Komar-class guided missile patrol boats would bring the total in Cuba to 16. An installation on Cuba's northern coast in the area of Santa Cruz del Norte, which had previously been reported as a SAM site, has now been identified as a cruise-type missile coastal defense site similar to the site at Banes in Oriente Province. We also note a continuing training effort on the part of the Cuban armed forces to attain a proficiency in the use of recently acquired Soviet equipment.

"The 25 September Cuban-Soviet contract, establishing the first base for Soviet fishing vessels outside of Bloc waters, will improve Soviet Sigint collection facilities in the Western Hemisphere by providing a convenient base for Soviet naval-subordinated Sigint trawlers operating against targets in North America.

"A further Soviet effort to forestall any US action against Cuba was suggested by Khrushchev's belligerent line on Cuba in his recent talks with the Austrian Vice Chancellor. He harshly charged that the US intends to blockade Soviet shipping, claiming that this would be an act of war, and stated that Soviet vessels have instructions to proceed even if fired on by US warships. He added that the Soviet Union would use submarines and rockets to enforce the right of passage. Later in the conversation, Khrushchev said that he believed there would be no war over Cuba."

2. Raised question at meeting whether MIG-21 is offensive or defensive. DIA says "can be either."

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